

Bios of Participants

Pesticides, People, Pollinators and the Planet Conference

Patricia Algara, ASLA, is co-founder and principal of BASE and a lecturing professor at UC Berkeley and UCBX, where she teaches “Designing for Difference,” a class that looks at the social factors for designing public open spaces. Patricia is a bee advocate whose work focuses on creating productive educational landscapes and healthy habitats for pollinators. She started the nonprofit organization, With Honey In the Heart, to create healthy habitats for bees and to educate about bees. She has lectured at various universities and conferences in the U.S. and Mexico about the issues affecting bees and solutions through design. She is a permaculture designer and avid beekeeper who strives to apply to her design work the values she has learned from bees: that beauty, function, structure, and communication can intersect sweetly.

Lisa Arkin is the Executive Director of Beyond Toxics. She has thirty years of experience in research, higher education, and nonprofit management. Through her grassroots organizing and legislative leadership, she has changed Oregon’s statewide discussion around pesticides, chemical drift, and children’s health. Her work with Beyond Toxics resulted in key legislation to reduce pesticides at all schools and state property in Oregon. In 2014, with her leadership, Beyond Toxics helped Eugene become the first city in the U.S. to ban bee-killing neonicotinoid pesticides. Arkin’s vision is to frame environmental protection as a human rights and social justice issue.

Chris Beekman has been a resident of Southern Oregon since 1988. He runs a retail satellite business and practices organic, sustainable farming techniques on his two-and-a-half-acre home site, and he has extensive experience in growing marijuana organically. His work focuses on community building, mentoring future generations, ecological activism, and awareness of the importance of whole foods grown responsibly on smaller farms. He enjoys cooking and baking the best foods, working outdoors, understanding how things work, sharing learned knowledge, and living simply and close to the earth in the quiet of the country.

Donna Breedlove is a specialist in organic and sustainable landscape design, installation, and maintenance methods. A graduate of U.C. Berkeley in Landscape Architecture, she is the former owner of One Earth Landscape in Medford and, previously, Tierra Linda Landscape in Martinez, California.

Aimee Code is the Pesticide Program Director at the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. She has more than seventeen years of experience working to protect people and the environment from pesticides, with particular attention to protecting low-income families. She was integral in efforts to reduce pesticide contamination in salmon-supporting waters. Her knowledge of

toxicology, coupled with her understanding of native bees, has allowed her to help activists around the country to pass pollinator protection policies. Aimee received her M.S. in Environmental Health with a minor in Toxicology from Oregon State University.

Cara Cruickshank is the Founder and Executive Director of EcoSolutions, a Washington nonprofit organization founded in 2004. EcoSolutions focuses on the hazards of industrial pesticides and fertilizers and educates citizens about natural yard care methods that are healthier and safer for humans, fish, wildlife, and water quality. As a co-founder of the Bainbridge Island Watershed Council, she worked on stormwater outreach and pollution prevention around the Puget Sound, focusing on natural yard care methods as one issue of non-point source pollution. Cara has worked with the Applegate & Bear Creek Watershed Councils, she co-wrote the Stream Smart website, and she is a member of and fiscal sponsor for the Pollinator Project Rogue Valley.

Nicole Del Pizzo is the Education Director for Lomakatsi, a nonprofit, grassroots organization that develops and implements forest and watershed restoration projects across thousands of acres in Oregon and northern California. She manages Lomakatsi's Restoration Ecology Education Program, which develops and implements streamside restoration projects. She also manages the grant writing, native plant nursery management, community engagement, youth education, and restoration ecology curriculum development, all of which make Lomakatsi's Education Program a success.

Dr. McClane Duncan is a Naturopathic Physician at Siskiyou Vital Medicine, where he integrates nature-based therapies, utilizing the healing power of nature to bring about health and wellness. He focuses on regenerative therapeutics, nutrition, and detoxification modalities, while maintaining a natural family practice rooted in Vitalism. Dr. Duncan believes that we are an integral part of nature and that we depend upon a healthy environment to obtain longevity and freedom from disease.

Laura Bee Ferguson is the Director of the College of the Melissae: Center for Sacred Beekeeping, where students study the honey bee through a focused, liberal arts approach, with special attention to Science, the Sacred, History, Mystery, Art/Medicine, and Activism. Laura is an international speaker, volunteer, and activist. Details about Laura's work can be found at www.collegeofthemelissae.com, the portal to her online teaching platform. Laura Bee manages treatment-free apiaries and is the proud tender of survivor honey bees whose colonies have been chemical-free for up to five years.

Mike Gardiner is Chair of the Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission (APRC). Since joining the committee in 2002, he has served on several committees,

including Ashland's Bee City USA Committee. Mike is a 30-year Ashland resident. He and his wife garden and grow fruit trees on their urban property, and Mike has been a beekeeper for the past five years. The APRC updated its Integrated Pest Management Policy in May 2010, and the committee supports a healthy Community Garden program in several Ashland neighborhood parks and at the North Mountain Park Nature Center.

William Gearen is a student at Southern Oregon University, where he is a Coordinator of the ECOS Community Garden, a director of the SOU Beekeeping Club, and a founder of SOU's Bee Campus USA Committee. Through the Beekeeping Club, he helps to maintain ten honey bee hives on the SOU campus, and he organizes education and outreach activities related to gardening and beekeeping. Will is enjoying his third year as a beekeeper.

Chris Hardy is a fourth-generation farmer, and he is inspired to support a shift in how the world feeds itself. He has traveled extensively and has spent his life engaged in hands-on work with the land. His work as an organic farmer, educator, and consultant includes use of regenerative forms of agriculture and seed-to-table food systems as the foundation for sustaining future generations. He was the initiator of an overwhelmingly successful campaign in Southern Oregon to ban genetically engineered crops (GMOs), and he brought farmers and citizens together from all disciplines to protect the way of life for those who use organic and traditional agricultural practices.

Jessica Harper managed The Farm at SOU for the past two years. Currently, she's the Director of Sustainability for SOU's student government. As Jessica gears up to graduate in June, her aim is to become a primary care physician. Her passion is to bridge medicine with food cultivation.

Tom Landis is a forester who retired after 30 years of working as a nursery specialist for the U.S. Forest Service. With the change from commercial forestry to ecosystem management, Tom became more interested in propagating native plants for restoration purposes. On moving to the Rogue Valley, he saw just a few monarch butterflies each year and initially concluded that they must not be common. When he learned that western monarch populations had crashed, he decided to use his nursery training to propagate milkweeds and other nectar plants to bring monarchs back to southern Oregon.

Kim Leval is the Executive Director of the Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides [NCAP], and she has worked within the nonprofit community for twenty-five years to advance alternatives to pesticides. Through education, research and demonstration, peer-to-peer learning, and federal/state policy efforts, Kim and the NCAP team strive to protect community and environmental health and inspire the use of ecologically sound solutions to reduce the use of pesticides. Kim serves as an Oregon Organic Coalition Policy Committee advisor and on the policy

committee of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition. She holds a B.A. in International Studies from the University of Oregon and an M.S. in Adult Education and Agricultural Extension from Cornell University.

Dagoberto Morales is the director of Ùnete, the Center for Farm Worker Advocacy, and he has worked with the local farmworker and immigrant community for over twenty years. Dagoberto served on the Oregon Commission for Hispanic Affairs and as Commissioner for the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Affairs' Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (Institute for Mexicans Abroad). After studying Agriculture in Mexico and working in the fields upon his arrival in the U.S. in 1982, he experienced firsthand the harsh treatment and dangerous working and living conditions that farmworkers face. Dagoberto has made it his life's mission to see that changes are made to protect workers and their families.

Kathy O'Leary is the owner of Valley View Orchard, an Ashland orchard that has been certified organic since 2002. In addition to growing tree fruit, she and her husband produce Long Walk Vineyard wine. She studied Industrial Engineering and previously worked as a strategic technology consultant.

Mike Oxendine is the Supervisor for Southern Oregon University's Landscape Services Department. He has called Oregon home since 1985, and he loves being a part of the Rogue Valley. He is an avid sports enthusiast and enjoys backpacking with his wife, Erin, and his dog, Indy. Mike has worked as a landscaper since 2001, and he is passionate about working outside with plants. He is a professional Certified International Society of Arboriculture Arborist, a licensed Oregon Landscape Professional, and a member of the City of Ashland's Tree Commission. He holds an A.S. in Business and will graduate from SOU this summer with a B.S. in Innovation and Leadership. Mike is focused on making SOU's landscape the most sustainable in the nation. For example, he founded and chairs SOU's Tree Advisory Committee. Through his leadership and collaboration, the Arbor Day Foundation awarded SOU with the distinguished Tree Campus USA title, SOU's Silver Maple tree (Shasta/McLoughlin courtyard) earned the City of Ashland's Tree of the Year award in 2015, and SOU became the nation's first Bee Campus USA designee.

Ron Roth and his wife Kathleen MacMichael have lived in Ashland for 40 years. They operated Geppetto's, a beloved downtown Ashland restaurant, from 1977 to 2009. They have grown organic vegetables and grapes at Eagle Mill Farm in Ashland since 1982. The oldest vines in the vineyard are 35 years old. Eagle Mill Farm is protected by a conservation easement through the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy and is certified Salmon Safe.

Sharon Schmidt became interested in health and how pesticides and poisons influence human health after becoming a nurse. Presently, she is a semi-retired nurse practitioner, a clinical psychologist, and a student of beekeeping. Dr. Schmidt has written for international journals, and her most recent publication is

on bees and cannabis. She is the Founder and Director of the nonprofit Cascade Girl Organization, which produces the Oregon Honey Festival. This year, the festival will be held in Ashland from August 20–21, in celebration of National Honey Bee Day.

Ray Seidler is a retired senior research scientist with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA]. He was elected as a Fellow of the American Academy for Microbiology, listed as one of the 2,000 Outstanding World Scientists of the 20th Century by the International Biographical Centre of Cambridge England, and listed in Who's Who in the World; he twice received U.S. EPA Bronze Medals for his research service, and he is one of three founding editors of *Molecular Ecology*, a science journal dedicated to cutting edge research in this field. Ray has authored/co-authored over 155 scientific peer-reviewed publications, and he wrote the first Biosafety research plans for the U.S. EPA, describing a research plan for evaluating genetically engineered microbes and crop plants.

Sharon Selvaggio is the Healthy Wildlife and Water Program Director at the Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides [NCAP], where she provides technical assistance, outreach, and policy analysis, with a focus on pesticides and alternatives that benefit salmon and pollinators. Through her work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest Service, she has worked as a National Wildlife Refuge manager, conservation planner, and wildlife biologist. She has experience overseeing farming programs, monitoring water quality, and evaluating impacts to endangered species. She holds a B.A. in Biology and an M.S. in Energy and Resources, both from University of California at Berkeley.

Phyllis Stiles is the Founder and Director of Bee City USA® and Bee Campus USA, both of which are based in Asheville, North Carolina, and she is a national advocate for protecting pollinators. She was named the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign's United States Pollinator Advocate for 2015. You may reach her at beecityusa@gmail.com.

Joseph Vaile is the Executive Director of KS Wild, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of the rivers, forests, and wild areas in southern Oregon and northern California. Joseph has served on several regional and national committees to advance the protection of wild nature.

Samantha Pennington–Vrsek is currently a student in SOU's Innovation and Leadership Program and holds a full-time staff position as the Sustainability and Landscape Maintenance Specialist for SOU's Landscape Services Department. She served in ASSOU, SOU's student government, as Director of Sustainability, and she was one of the first student employees at The Farm at SOU. She sits on the Sustainability Council and is actively involved across campus. As a landscaper, she is also a licensed pesticide applicator, and her understanding and concern about synthetic pesticides led her to collaborate with SOU's environmentally-conscious

Landscape Services crew to research ways to manage SOU's campus without the use of glyphosate. They are currently testing an innovative project to eliminate 100% of SOU's use of glyphosate by using safer alternatives that include organic pesticides and mechanical means.

Marsha Waite has been a Master Gardener since 1995 and has been the Plant Clinic Coordinator for 19 years, answering the public's questions on all facets of gardening and pest control. Marsha has taught Entomology and Integrated Pest Management each year to new prospective Master Gardeners across several counties. She has given lectures on organic gardening, plant diseases, structure pests, and garden and landscape pest management to many garden clubs, symposiums, and Extension programs, and she trains Master Gardeners and advisers in the Plant Clinic each year. She has written many gardening articles for the Medford Mail-Tribune and the Garden Beet, and she is the head gardener of the Daylily Garden on the Extension grounds. She was the 2007 Oregon State Master Gardener of the year.